

The Crown Estate Disclosure Log

Case no: 1147
Date received: 26 November 2019
Subject: Escheat Properties UK
Request response
<p>Please find responses to your questions below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p><i>1. How many properties are subject of Escheat in (a) The whole of The United Kingdom and (b) England only, which fall to be dealt with by The Crown Estate. I ask this question because the information on the numbers published on your web site is none specific and out of date.</i></p> <p>It is not possible to give a categoric response to this question, because the actual number of properties which are subject to escheat under common law is not known to us. While any property that is deemed subject to escheat to the Crown falls to be dealt with by The Crown Estate, such property is effectively ownerless and is not managed by The Crown Estate. We are therefore reliant on notifications from third parties of properties which either are, or may have become, subject to escheat. A list of properties comprising information taken from those notifications is maintained by our appointed lawyers on escheat, Burges Salmon. We attach the current list as Attachment 1. We are not always informed about events that lead to properties becoming subject to escheat. Please therefore note that Attachment 1 is not guaranteed to be a complete answer to your question.</p> <p><i>2. How many properties are subject of Escheat in the County of North Yorkshire, England?</i></p> <p><i>3. How many properties are subject of Escheat in the Borough Council of Scarborough, North Yorkshire?</i></p> <p><i>4. What are the postal addresses and postcodes of properties subject of Escheat in both Scarborough and North Yorkshire?</i></p> <p>We do not hold lists in the format requested but Attachment 1 contains the information requested in these questions.</p> <p><i>5. What was the total cost to The Crown Estate of dealing with properties subject of Escheat in the United Kingdom for the financial year 2018/19?</i></p> <p>The total billed to The Crown Estate for the financial year 2018/19 was £262,871.50.</p>

6. *For the financial year 2018/19 for the United Kingdom; what was the total sum of money raised by The Crown Estate from the sale or other disposal of properties subject of Escheat?*

The total proceeds/disposal figure for this period was £2,670,032.29. Subtracting the costs billed above, this leaves £2,407,160.79.

7. *Were all costs associated with dealing with properties subject of Escheat recovered?*

Yes.

8. *If the answer to number 7 is 'no' what is the financial shortfall?*

N/a.

9. *Please supply any Key Performance Indicators of The Crown Estate associated with dealing with Escheated properties?*

Key Performance Indicators are not in place. The unique nature of the law relating to properties which are subject to escheat means that The Crown Estate is unable to undertake any acts of management in relation to those properties. As such, the pace of any of these transactions must be dictated by the buyer through the review, consultation, market appraisal and disposal process.

10. *What is the average period of time between properties becoming subject of Escheat and their eventual disposal by The Crown Estate? (The number of properties disposed of within the last five years will be sufficient)*

We do not hold this information. Please see the reply to question 9 above. Since we cannot undertake acts of management in relation to properties which are subject to escheat, the pace of these transactions must be dictated by the buyer through the review, consultation, market appraisal and disposal process.

11. *Why do The Crown Estate employ the services of Burges Salmon Solicitors and not use in-house legal services to deal with their responsibilities regarding properties subject of Escheat?*

The Crown Estate operates an outsourced model meaning that the in house legal team is not involved in any transactional work. This is handled by our panel law firms, of which Burges Salmon is the appointed firm for escheat matters.

More information about the escheat process as a whole is available in this guidance note, online at the following address: <https://www.burges-salmon.com/-/media/files/non-pub-pdfs/escheat-guidance-flyer.pdf?la=en>

I hope that this response is helpful. However, if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your information request, you may appeal our decision which will then be investigated through an internal review. If you are not content with the outcome of that, you have the right to refer any complaint directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (contact details are available at: www.ico.org.uk). The ICO will usually expect you to have first exhausted our own complaints procedure before raising any concerns with them.